PRICING STRATEGIES AND TOURISTS SATISFACTION IN TOURISTS' SITES IN SOUTH-EAST, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This research investigated on the relationship between pricing strategies and tourist satisfaction in South-East, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were to investigate the relationship between competitive and discount pricing strategies and tourist satisfaction proxied by repurchase intentions and positive word-of-mouth promotion. Survey method was used to conduct the study, and this involved the use of rating scale for data collection. Data analysis was carried out using percentage, mean and standard deviation. Test of the hypotheses was done with Pearson Correlation statistical technique. The result revealed that competitive pricing strategy of tourists' sites significantly affect repurchase intentions, and word-of-mouth promotion. Also there is significant relationship between discount pricing and repurchase intentions. The study concludes that pricing strategies are essential instruments for achieving repurchase intentions and positive word-of-mouth promotion among tourists in the South-East, Nigeria. The study recommended that tourists' sites that aim to enhance tourist satisfaction should adopt competitive and discount pricing strategies for better business operation.

Keywords: Pricing strategies, tourists' Satisfaction, Competitive Pricing, repurchase intention, discount pricing, word of mouth.

INTRODUCTION

Pricing is one of the most important elements of the tourism marketing mix, as it can influence demand, profitability and perception of tourism destination or business.

However, setting the right price is not always easy, especially in a competitive market where tourists have many options and expectations.

In ordinary parlance, pricing is the act of selling or fixing price of product or service. It can also be referred to as the interaction between the seller and buyer over the actual price of product or service offered for sale. Boztug (2015) states that pricing embodies a multitude of concepts which focused on how a company decides prices for its offering based on multiple factors such as cost, customers, and competitors.

Coleman (2018) sees pricing strategy as the value that is put to a product or service and is the result of a complex set of calculations-research and risk taking ability. Pricing strategy is the technique applied by a firm or tourist site in using price to achieve volume of sales in a competitive market environment. At a certain price level, if the volume perceived by the customer is higher, it will create maximum satisfaction. Customers (tourists) will be very sensitive about prices because consumers will compare price with what they get. Price has an important role in determining the decision of consumers to buy goods or service.

A cursory assessment of the operation of tourists' sites in South East reveals that not much is known of the extent to which adaption of pricing strategies such as discounting and competitive pricing can be used to achieve customer/tourist satisfaction in terms of repurchase intention and tourist word-of-mouth. In the South East, Nigeria, there are a good number of tourists' sites located in all the five states of the geopolitical zone, but most of these tourists' sites apart from few like Rojenny Tourist Village Oba, Awka Wonder Land, are operating far below tourist expectations as tourist satisfaction is tilting towards the low level of satisfaction matrix (Yuksel, 2019).

The provision of tourist satisfaction and quality tourism experience is fundamental for tourists' sites for a number of reasons (Yuksel, 2019). First, satisfaction reinforces positive attitude towards a brand leading to greater likelihood that the same brand will be purchased again. Second, the satisfaction of tourists is cost effective approach to retaining tourists, and third, it leads to word-of-mouth recommendations which enhances sales volume and profitability of tourists sites (Yuksel, 2019). Tourists' destination/site that fail to pay attention to the provision and improvement of tourists' satisfaction and overlook their short coming, stand to lose their market share Therefore, understanding customer/tourist satisfaction lies at very heart of effective provision and management of tourist satisfaction, and thus, accurate measurement of tourist

satisfaction is a vital ingredient to the success of tourists' sites in both short and long run (Yuksel, 2019).

It has been revealed that proper pricing of tourists' sites' products and services encourages tourists to visit and purchase the products and services. However, inefficient execution of pricing strategies particularly discounting and competitive pricing by tourists' sites operators' impact negatively on tourists satisfaction (Mweti, Nyangan and Ayora, 2021). This observation could not be far from the situation in the tourists' sites operating in the South East, Nigeria. Effective pricing of tourists' sites in the South East has called for collaborative efforts among operators and tourism marketing professionals to generate desired tourist satisfaction (Echeta, 2016). The performance of tourists' sites operating in South East Nigeria has not been entirely explored as evidence by the low levels of tourists' satisfaction in terms of repeat purchase and word-of-mouth Ayoola and Ibrahim (2020) opined that customer/tourists' satisfaction emphasizes delivering value for money to customers and obtaining profits in return.

According to Crompton and Love (2015), tourists' satisfaction is central to success in the delivery of tourist and leisure services. According to Ajake (2015) effective tourist satisfaction derived from tourists' sites justifies the success of pricing strategies adopted by the tourists' sites. The question one may ask is, "are operators of tourists 'sites in the South-East familiar with the importance of competitive and discount pricing systems towards tourist satisfaction?" This seminar is poised to provide answer to the research question. This scenario justifies the need to examine the relationship between pricing strategies and tourist satisfaction using South-East, Nigeria as focal point.

Statement of the Problem

The contribution of pricing strategies especially competitive and discounting pricing towards generating tourist satisfaction by tourists' sites cannot be over emphasized. Adoption of competitive and discount pricing strategies has the tendency to impact on the issue of tourist satisfaction and increase it considerably. However, it is on record that pricing strategies (i.e competitive and discounting) in most cases are neglected and such has negatively affected the ability of tourists' site delivery of value for money to tourists and by extension effective utilization of tourism benefits (Ozuzu, 2021). More so, researchers have not actually established the basic relationship between pricing strategies and tourist satisfaction using South-East, Nigeria as point of reference.

Majority of studies done in the past have Nigerian background and therefore, South-East was not covered. Even the one carried out in Nigeria did not focus in tourists' sites in South-East, Ajake (2015) carried out similar study in Cross River State. Aduba (2014) surveyed the effect of discount pricing on customer satisfaction and patronage. The work used selected firms in the South-East but was not specific on tourists' sites in the South-East.

On the basis of the past studies focal points, it could be seen that the exact subject matter of this work has not been covered by the past researchers hence, there is no established relationship between pricing strategies, particularly discount and competitive pricing, and tourist satisfaction over the services of tourists' sites in the South-East, Nigeria. This constitutes a gap in the literature and the present study attempted to fill the gap by empirically investigated the effect of competitive and discounting pricing strategies on tourists satisfaction in terms of positive word-of-mouth and repurchase intention. The researcher studied selected tourists' sites in the South-East as point of reference.

Figure 1; below shows the operational framework of the study. This forms the basis of study objectives, research questions and hypotheses.

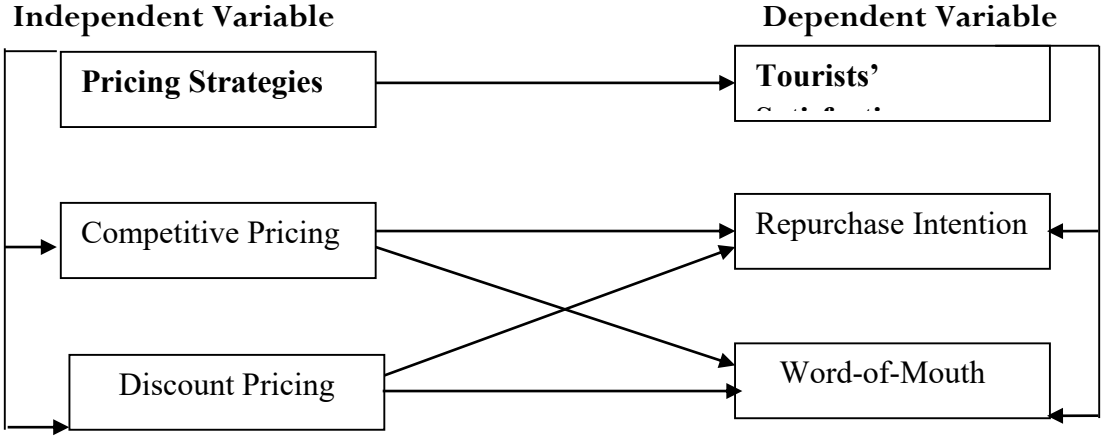


Figure 1: Operational Framework
Source: Researcher's Desk, 2024

Objective of the Study

The major objective of the study was to examine the relationship of pricing strategies and tourist satisfaction in tourists' sites in the South-East, Nigeria. However, the study concentrated on these specific objectives to:

1. assess the relationship between competitive pricing strategy and tourist repurchase intention in tourists' sites in South-East Nigeria.
2. examine the extent competitive pricing strategy relate with word-of-mouth promotion.
3. assess the influence of discount pricing strategy on tourists' repurchase intention
4. investigate the relationship between discount pricing strategy tourists' sites and word-of-mouth promotion.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated from the research objectives to guide the researcher in data collection.

1. What is the relationship between competitive pricing strategy and tourists repurchase intention?
2. To what extent does competitive pricing strategy relate with word-of-mouth promotion?
3. What is the extent of relationship between discount pricing strategy and tourists' repurchase intention?
4. What is the relationship between discount pricing strategy of tourists' sites and word-of –mouth promotion

Hypotheses

H_O1: There is no significant relationship between competitive pricing strategy and tourists' repurchase intention.

H_O2: Tourists' sites' competitive pricing strategy does not significantly relate with word-of-mouth promotion.

H_O3: There is no significant relationship between discount pricing and repurchase intention of tourists' sites in the South-East, Nigeria

H_O4: There is no significant relationship between Discount pricing strategy and word-of-mouth promotion.

Scope of the Study

For the content scope, the researcher used competitive pricing and discount pricing as indicators of pricing strategies. It also used repeat purchase intention and word-of-mouth as indicators of tourists satisfaction.

The research geographical scope covered some selected tourists sites in South East, Nigeria. The tourist sites to be selected were based on their viability marketing capabilities in terms of inflow of tourists that patronize them. The tourist's sites are as listed on Table 1 below:

Table 1 Selected Tourists Sites in the South East

States	Tourists Sites
Abia	Ojukwu Bunker (War Museum) Umuahia
Anambra	Rojenny Tourists Village Oba, Onisha
	Awka Wonder Land, Awka
	Ogbunike Cave, Ogbunike
Ebonyi	Uburu Salt Site, Uburu L.G.A
Enugu	Nike Lake Hotel Resort Enugu
	Adada Recreational River Side, Nsukka
	Nsude Pyramid, Udi L.G.A.

Source: Researcher's Desk, 2024.

Note: Imo State was not chosen because there is no functional tourist site in the State.

The unit scope comprises the employees of the tourist sites.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study explains the benefits accruing from this research and the individuals and groups that will benefit directly from the research. In this regard, the study will be useful to Entrepreneurs and Managers of Tourists' Sites, Tourists/Customers that Patronize Tourist Sites, the Society, Government, and Researchers.

Conceptual Review

Concept of Pricing

Pricing is the process of deciding the price of a product or service offered to customers. According to Boztug (2015) pricing embodies a multitude of concepts which focus on how a company or an organization decides prices for its offerings on the basis of various factors such as cost, customers and competitors. Anyanwu (2013) defined pricing as the

process of reaching at a price of any good or service. Anyanwu (2013) illustrated pricing process as stated thus:

Nagle, Muller and Grinyaert (2023) conceptualize pricing as the process of designing offering and estimating sales volume followed by assessing costs such as variable and fixed costs as well as pricing objectives to determine a final price.

Kwan and Kalemela (2014) defined pricing as a method used to set the price of a producer's offering relevant to both the producer and the customer. Shipley and Jobber (2001) states that pricing is the process whereby an organization or firm sets the price at which it will sell its products and services as part of the firm's marketing plan. Pricing is vital in attracting customers, and also the basis of optimizing a product's actual worth in the market place (Yeoman & McMahon, 2004).

Moving further Yeoman and McMahon (2004) states that pricing is the only marketing mix that generates revenue for a firm, while it is also the most flexible element of the marketing mix in that pricing decision can be implemented quickly in response to changing market situations (e.g price changes). Accordingly Kotler (2018) states that pricing is an element of marketing mix. He further adduced that price is the marketing mix element that produces revenue, the other market mix elements-place, product and promotion produce costs. It is stated that pricing is a common term used in economics and marketing, and it is the act of establishing a value for a product or service. In other words, pricing occurs when a company decides how much a customer must pay for a product or service. Also pricing refers to the decision making process that goes into establishing a value for product or service. The price that is set during the pricing process is what they customer will pay for that product or service.

From the definitions of pricing it could be adduced that pricing is a management function whereby organizations such as tourists sites decides on the monetary value of a product or service produced and offered to the market after taking into consideration all the factors that led to the finished good like cost of raw material, transport, competition and consumer behaviour.

Pricing Objectives

There is no agreed set of objectives which al companies or tourist sites must subscribe to achieve success in their business plan. Anyanwu (2013) state some of the pricing objective to include – to gain market position, achieve financial performance, product positioning, stimulate demand and influence competition. Anyanwu (2013) move

further to give another method of looking at pricing objectives-profit, oriented (target return, maximum profit, cash flow), Sales oriented (naira or unit sales growth, growth in market share); status quo According to Diamantopoulos (1990) cited in Kwan et al, 2014. The objective functions of companies are multifaceted in that the viability of companies (tourist sites) rest on a combination of different pricing objectives. These objectives are flexible and change over time due to environmental or organizational conditionals (Shipley and Jobber, 2001). Pricing objectives may be either supportive or conflictual. This means that some pricing objectives support each other while some conflict with the other. Thus, there are objectives that are compatible with each other, for example market share increase and sales increase, and objectives that oppose one another e.g sales maximization versus profit maximization (Myers et al, 2002 cited in Kwan and Kalemela, 2014). In their own contribution Cakvanegara, Kumiadi, Sample) Pangemanan and Yusuf (2022) state that corporate entities have five primary pricing objectives which can be selectively pursued, or only with subjective tailored to the company's specific circumstances. These objectives include survival, profit maximization, market share maximization, market skimming increase, and product quality excellence.

At a certain price level, if the value perceived by the customer is higher, it will create maximum satisfactions. Customers will be very sensitive about prices because consumers will compare price with what they get. Price has an important role in determining the decision of consumers to buy goods or service.

Pricing Strategies

Pricing is one of the most important elements of the tourism marketing mix, as it can influence, the demand, profitability and perception of destination or business.

However, setting the right price is not always easy, especially in a competitive market where tourists have many options and expectations.

Value-Based Pricing

Value-base pricing is a strategy that involves setting about prices according to the perceived value and benefits that your offer provides to target market. This means that you need to understand what your customers are looking for, what they are willing to pay and how they compare your offer to your competitors. Value-based pricing can help you differentiate your offer, increase customer satisfaction, and justify higher prices.

However, you also need to be careful not to cover price your offer, as this can lead to customer dissatisfaction and negative word-of-mouth.

Value-based pricing in tourism is also a great way to curate the flow of potential customer pricing low for your experience perceived value will drive tourists to come in large numbers to your tourists' site.

Dynamic Pricing Strategy

Dynamic Pricing Strategy is a strategy that involves adjusting your prices according to the changes in demand, supply, and market conditions. This means that you can charge higher price when the demand is high, such as during peak seasons, holidays, or special events, a lower prices when the demand is low, such as during off-peak, weekdays, or low seasons.

Dynamic pricing can help you optimize your revenue, attract more customers, and respond to market fluctuations. However, you also need to be transparent and consistent with your pricing as this can affect your reputation and customer loyalty.

Discounting and Bundling

Discounting and bundling are two strategies that involve offering lower prices or adding value to your offering to encourage customer to buy more or to buy sooner. Discounting involves reducing your prices temporarily or permanently, such as by offering compares, vouchers or loyalty programs. Bundling involves combining your products or services with other complementary or related offers, such as by offering packages, deals or upgrades. Discounting and bundling can help you increase your sales volume, clear your inventory, and attract new customers. However, you also need to be careful not to devalue your offer, erode your profit margin, or cannibalize your sales.

Psychological Pricing

Psychological Pricing is a strategy that involves using the psychological effect of numbers, wards and symbols to influence the perception and behaviour of your customers. This means that you can use various techniques, such as charmpricing, prestige pricing, or anchoring, to make your prices seem more appealing, attractive, or reasonable. Psychological pricing can help you increase your conversion rate, enhance your image, and communicate your value proposition. However, you also need to be ethical and honest with your pricing, as this can affect your trustworthiness and credibility.

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Competitive Pricing

Competitive pricing is a strategy that involves setting your prices according to the prices of your competitors. This means that you need to monitor and analyze the prices of your direct and indirect competitive, and decide whether to match, undercut or exceed their prices. Competitive pricing can help you stay relevant competitive, and profitable in your market. However, they also need to consider your costs, value, and differentiation, as this can affect your sustainability and positioning.

Pricing is a powerful tool that can help you achieve your tourism marketing goals but it also requires careful planning, research, and testing. By using these pricing strategies, you can attract and retain tourists in a competitive market and create a win-win situation for both you and your customers.

Factors Affecting Tourists' Satisfaction

In addition, results confirmed that overall tourist satisfaction is significantly different based on some controlling factors, namely demographic characteristics, cultural characteristics travel behaviour characteristics and information source.

Satisfaction: Psychological concept that involves a feeling of well being and pleasure resulting from the interaction between a tourist experience of the destination and the expectations formed about that destination (WTO, 2012).

Tourist/Customer Repurchase Intention

Revisit intention or repurchase intention has been identified as a key research topic in tourism literature (Li, Wen & Ying, 2018). Many researchers agreed that repeat visitors tend to stay longer at a destination, participate more intensively in consumptive activities, are more satisfied, and spread positive word of mouth, whilst requiring much lower marketing costs than first time visitors (Zhang, Wu & Buhalis, 2018).

The intention to revisit a tourism destination, in this context tourists' site, can be seen as a type of post consumption behaviour (Cole & Scott, 2004) and has been designed as a visitor repeating an activity or revisiting a destination. It also relates to the visitors' judgement about the likeliness or plans to revisit the same destination (Khasawneh & Alfandi, 2019) or the willingness to recommend the destination to others.

It is generally agreed that customer satisfaction is significant to achieve loyalty, not only in physical products, but also in the context of tourism (Som & Badarneh, 2011). According to Um, Chon & Ro, 2006) revisit intention is regarded as extension of

satisfaction. When tourists derive pleasant feeling from a tourism destination, they will probably be satisfied with that place leading to an increased intention to revisist. In this case, Viet, Dang and Nguyen (2020) opined that tourists satisfaction positively impacts on tourist revisit intention.

Moving further Schiffman and Kamuk (2010) adduced that consumer decision making process involve series of cognitive actions before a consumer makes a purchase decision. This process involves problem or need recognition, the search for relevant information, evaluation of information, purchase and post-purchase evaluation (Engel, Blackwell & Minlard, 2006). The outcome of the purchase decision, however, either leads to cognitive dissatisfaction and subsequent rejection of product/service or satisfaction, and therefore a repurchase intention (Schiffman & Kamuk, 2010). Repurchase intention is the decision to rebuy a product or service regularly in the future thus, leading to a repetition of brand purchase or brand-set purchase (Oliver, 2007). A repurchase intention occurs at the cognitive, affective, conative (behavioural intention) and action (actual behaviour) levels.

Jienying et al (2006) defined intention as the subjective probability of specific behaviours. The stronger the intention a person has, the higher the probability he or she makes a corresponding behaviour. Repurchase is also known as "repeated purchase" Chen (2002) proposed in his research that repurchases intention means that customers wish and tend to maintain trading relationship with supplier (tourists' site). The customer with a stronger re-purchase intention will be more likely to buy the same thing again and again. It is also the process of analyzing the environment and designing the fit between the organization, its resources and objectives. It also incorporates the environment.

Tourist/Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is a general principle of customer service. It measures a customers' perception of the quality and utility of a product or service. Customer satisfaction can be measured by offering a service or production, or by having a relationship with a company brand, or individual.

Customer satisfaction is the cornerstone of any business, be at tourists' site, company, enterprise, hotel and so on. Understanding the customer and creating a system to create satisfying experience for the customers will enable a tourists' site to boost its profits and repeat purchase by customers/tourists. To achieve tourist/customer satisfaction, tourists' site must understand the customers/tourists' needs and wants their main

points. Only then can the tourists' site make sure they are fulfilled with each interaction with the tourists.

Word-of-Mouth Promotion

Word-of-Mouth Promotion is one of the tourist behaviour that indicates that a tourist or consumer enjoys satisfaction over consumption or purchase of product of service. It is a post consumption behaviour of a customer indication feeling of fulfillment or a product or service meeting the expectation of the customer which he/she tells others.

According to Wikipedia definition of word-of-mouth, it is the communication between consumers about product, service, or company in which the services are considered independent of direct commercial influence that has been actively influenced or encouraged as marketing. Word-of-Mouth marketing (or WOM marketing) is when a consumer's interest in a company's product or service is reflected in their daily dialogues. Essentially, it is free advertising triggered by customer expenses and usually, something that goes beyond what they expected. Word-of-mouth marketing can be encouraged through different publicity activities set up by companies by having opportunities to encourage consumer-to-consumer and consumer-to-marketer communications. Also referred to as Word-of-Mouth advertising, WOM marketing includes viral and emotional and social media marketing.

Word-of-Mouth marketing (WOM marketing) happens when consumers (tourists) talk about a company's (tourists) talk about a company's (tourists' sites) product or service to their friends family, and others with whom they have close relationships WOM marketing is one of the most powerful forms of advertising as 88% of consumers trust their friends recommendations over their traditional media.

Companies can encourage WOM marketing by exceeding expectations on a product, providing good customer service, and giving exclusive information to consumers. The best Word-of-Mouth strategies are honesty, being credible, social, measurable, and respectful. Word-of-Mouth marketing/promotion is important as it is an effective way to increase sales, promote products and services, increase brand recognition, and build customer loyalty.

Many companies (tourists' sites a like) employ strategies that promote customers to recommend their services and/or products and share positive experiences essentially, companies create the spark that causes the firestorm of charter among consumers, and since studies show that most people trust the advice of family and friends, focusing on

Word-of-Mouth marking can be more beneficial and cost-effective than other forms of marketing.

Tourists sites with limited promotion budgets depend mainly on Word-of-Mouth (WOM) among customers (Jacilvandi, Salimipoour, Elyasi and Mohammadi (2017) WOM seems particularly important to the marketing of services. This is because services are experiential in nature and difficult to assess before purchase. It is revealed that service quality, personal interaction quality, physical environment quality, and perceived value influence, are the conditions that trigger Word-of-Mouth (Jacilvandi.et al, (2017).

Word-of-Mouth is the free oral and person-to-person discussion and communication among consumers involving in brand, products, or services in the market or consumption related affairs, where the receivers perceived the propagation being non-commercial (Dey and Sarma, 2010 Chen and Mo (2012) regarded Word-of-Mouth as an oral spreading, behaviour, referring to people-centered information propagation which was the non-commercial communication or recommendation of products brand, or services Hong, Liu, Chon and Tsai (2012) defined Word-of-Mouth as a person acquiring consumption experiences of others though the dynamic interaction in the social relationship network rather than through investigation Jacobsen and Munar (2012) considered Word-of-Mouth as the overall comment of a brand, the sum of comments of certain products, services or among people in a company. Different from traditional marketing, Word-of-Mouth would change the market point from the relationship between brand and individual customer to the interaction among customers.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Customer Value Theory

This theory was propounded by Woodruff (1997). This theory states that customer will measures the advantages and disadvantages of a product or service before buying it which is known as customer value. Woodruff (1997) explaining this concept from the perspective of changing customer's values. In his opinion, customer value refers to customer's satisfaction with a products attributes and auxiliary functions based on their likes and dislikes. Li (2001) described satisfaction as the benefit received by customer from an enterprise that participates in their consuming behaviour by managing them (Li and Zhang, 2020).

Therefore, the customer value theory, which extends customer guided market is the footstone to improve customer satisfaction and establish customer loyalty (Amoaka, Doe &Neequaye, 2021). Kotler (1972) cited in Amoaka et al (2021) believed that for enterprise, customer value management mainly lies in how to build a long-term interest relationship with customers and perceived values of customers are the key to greater competitive advantage. To this end, enterprises shall improve their services and resources with high quality products or services, thus maintaining such value (Amoaka, et al, 2021).

This theory is important to tourism industry in identifying pricing methods to be used by them that creates customer value. In effect, if the tourist's site identifies the interesting or acceptable pricing strategy to serve customers they will be able to serve the customers to their satisfaction.

Marketing Orientation Theory

Aaker (2016) showed that to be successful, businesses should determine customer need and want and satisfy them more effectively than their competitor. This seems right, so easily we forget this basic idea that to offer the best service, organizations must be the best at identifying the needs of their customers and identifying the most effective way to meet these needs. This theory is very important to the tourist site in identifying the pricing strategies to be used by them. This is because if an organization identifies the needs and wants of their customer they will be able to equally know the type of pricing strategy to be used on the satisfaction of those identified needs and want. Otherwise the tourist site may apply or use a wrong pricing strategy and the essence of the pricing strategies are for efficient performance of the organization, which is geared towards the satisfaction of customer's needs and wants. Finally this theory allows the tourism organization to relate with customer and its intended customers, this is the development of a cordial relationship between the tourist sites and the tourist or customers.

Contrast Theory

This is a well known theory of customer satisfaction (Juivel, 2022). According to this theory, when actual product performance falls short of the consumer's expectations about the product, the contrast between the expectation and outcome will cause the consumer to exaggerate the disparity. It implies that the negative impact of actual

product performance on customer satisfaction is greater than the positive impact of higher performance over lower performance.

Contrast theory states that when the expectation of a product is high and the actual product performance is perceived to be low, the consumer will exaggerate the difference between the expectation and the outcome. Contrast theory proposes that we do not judge qualities on the basis of absolute standard, but rather on the basis of how they compare with other qualities.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

For this study, the researcher adopted survey research design. Survey research design is an aspect of quantitative research design which provides numeric description of trends, attitudes and opinions of a population by studying a sample of the population (Modi & Mbonu, 2012). Survey is also a way of collecting relatively in-depth information which talks about respondents' attitudes and beliefs (Al-Azzam, 2016).

Population of the Study

The population of this study was the entire senior personnel of the selected tourism sites grouped as management staff, senior staff and supervisors. In this regard, the population of the study for staff is definite and was 215. This figure was obtained from personnel offices of the selected tourist sites. The population of staff was selected based on the staff strength of each tourist's site

Determination of Sample Size

Sample size of staff was determined using Taro Yamane statistical formula and the sample size for staff was 143.

Sampling Procedure

The researcher used non-probability sampling technique in selecting the respondents for the study. In effect, purposive/judgmental sampling technique was adopted in selecting the respondent. This procedure does not offer equal chances to the sampling units for being selected by the researcher. In this regard, the tourists who were readily available at the time of selection were considered.

Instrument for Data Collection

Questionnaire was used to collect data. The instrument was structured in two parts-Part A and Part B. In part A, the questions listed bordered on the personal data of respondents. Boxes were attached to each question for the respondent to tick the corresponding response/answer to each question. Part B contained questions on the purpose of the study, and which covered the independent and dependent variables. The responses options were Strongly Agreed (SA 4) Agreed (A 3) Strongly Disagreed (SD 2) Disagreed (D 1).

Validity of Research Instrument

The supervisor along with other experts after going through the questionnaire and assessing the contents, validity the instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument

Reliability of the instrument was carried out by using test/retest method. The researcher conducted a mock test with thirty (30) randomly selected respondents using convenience sampling method to reach at the respondents who were outside the locations of the tourist sites chosen for the study.

The first test was conducted, the result was 0.718. After two weeks the questionnaire was administered again on the same respondents, and the result was 0.717. Using Cronbach Alpha Statistical formula, test yielded reliability index of 0.714 indicating reliability of the research instrument.

Data Analysis Technique

The data collected with the questionnaire were presented in frequency distribution tables and analyzed with simple percentage, mean and standard deviation. To analyze data which centered on the thematic variables, descriptive statistics – mean and standard deviation were employed.

The test of hypotheses formulated for the study, the researcher used statistical tool $r = s$ Pearson Product Moment technique. The statistical technique was chosen because it measures the strength of association between independent and dependent variables. In this regard, the coefficient of Pearson tells us the extent of relationship which exists between independent and dependent variables in each of the hypotheses.

$$\frac{\sum(x - x)\ (\bar{Y} - \bar{Y})}{\sqrt{\left[\sum(x - x)^2\ (\bar{Y} - \bar{Y})^2\right]}}$$

Which can be shown to be equal to:

$$r = \frac{\sum xy - nxy}{\sqrt{(n-1)\,SD(x))\,SD(Y)}}$$

Decision Rule

Accept Ho, if r table is greater than r calculated, alternatively, the null hypothesis will be rejected if the r value is greater than the level of significance (0.05), otherwise the null hypothesis is accepted.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter consists of data presentation, analysis and interpretation. The data were presented on frequency distribution tables and analyzed with simple percent, mean and standard deviation. Out of 143 questionnaires distributed, only 136 were returned and used.

Table 2: Analysis of Respondents Responses to Questions on Adaption of Competitive Pricing Strategy

Questions in Statement Form	$\bar{X}$	Scale
Competitive Pricing		**Std Deviation**
My tourists' site adopts competitive pricing in offering its products and services to tourists.	3.1	1.22
My tourists' site fixes competitive prices on its products and service to ward off competitors?	3.2	1.32
Competitive pricing strategy being adopted by my tourists' site help to maintain its positive brand image?	3.4	1.49
Continuous adoption of competitive pricing strategy is not appropriate for check mating the inroads of competitors in the market?	1.9	.084

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The descriptive statistical analysis on Table 2 above shows that the average rating for the statement, my tourists' site adopts competitive pricing in offering its products and services to tourists because the tourists need to be attracted to the service / product; was 3.1. Based on the mean criterion of 2.50, this implies that on average the

respondents agreed that the customers/tourists are attracted to tourists' site's new product/service in so far as pricing is competitive. This means that tourists prefer competitive pricing for services especially ones that give them value for their money.
Similarly, the respondents agreed that their organizations adopt competitive pricing for their services to ensure customer satisfaction. The average rating for the statement was 3.2. Based on the criterion mean of 2.50 this implies that reasonable pricing of tourists' services gives an edge to tourists' site over the competitors.
Also, the respondents on average agreed that in order to maintain the outstanding image of their tourists' sites, management places attractive price on the tourists' sites services. The descriptive analysis on Table 1 above shows that the average rating for the statement was 3.4. Based on criterion mean of 2.50, this implies that on average the respondents agreed that competitive pricing gives an advantage to tourists' site's in terms of outstanding brand image. Similarly, the respondents disagreed to the statement, continuous adoption of competitive pricing strategy is not recommended for my tourist site to avoid competing with aggressive competitors. Having pooled a mean rating of 1.9 which is less than the criterion mean value. This suggest that the tourists' sites adopt competitive pricing strategy in order to compete favourably in the tourism market.
The standard deviation of the four statements respectively indicates that there is minor variation in the perception of respondents about competitive pricing strategy of tourists' sites. Simply put, there is little or insignificant difference in the rating of respondents regarding competitive pricing strategy adopted by tourists' sites. Therefore, it is evident that tourists of tourists sites in the study are highly appreciative of the tourists' sites they patronize and moreover the employee of competitive pricing strategy in the performance of tourists' sites.

Table 3: Analysis of Responses of Respondents to Questions on Adoption of Discount Pricing Strategy by Tourists' Site

Responses Scale Values	$\bar{X}$	Std Deviation
Discount pricing strategy helps my tourists' site to sustain its positive brand image?	3.7	1.609
Offering discount on my organization's services lowers its level of income	2.09	0.92
My organization offers discount pricing to increase patronage?	3.3	1.35
My organization discount pricing method makes the customers/tourist feel happy to patronize its products and services	3.4	1.49
My organization adopts discount pricing toward off competitors?	3.7	1.609

Source: Field Survey, 2024

In this Table 3 the respondents reported that they observed that discount pricing strategy sustains positive brand image as evidenced in the mean value for the statement, "Discount pricing strategy helps my tourists' site to sustain its positive brand image", which is 3.7. This mean value is greater than the criterion mean value of 2.50. However, in the statement," offering discount on my organizations' services lowers its level of income was rejected as evidenced on the mean value of 2.09- and since the mean value is less than the criterion mean value of 2.5, it then follows that the respondents actually rejected the statement and this implies that adopting discount pricing strategy should be done with caution to prevent heavy loss of revenue. In other way round, the respondents agreed discount pricing strategy could increase patronage subsequently upon the fact the mean value of the statement "my organization offers discount price to increase patronage is 3.3 which is greater than the acceptance, criterion mean value. Correspondingly, the respondents also emphasized that their tourists sites discount pricing strategy makes the customers/tourists feel happy to patronize its products as services as evidenced by mean value of 3.4 which is greater than acceptance mean criterion value of 2.5. Based on this it obvious that the tourists will feel satisfied in patronizing tourists' sites. Also, the respondents agreed that discount pricing is a strategy adopted by their organizations toward off competitors. This is consequent upon the mean value of the statement, "my organization adopts discount pricing toward off competitors, is 3.7, which is greater than the acceptance criterion mean value of 2.50.

Table 4: Analysis of tourists Responses of Questions which tourist satisfaction variables

Questions in State Form	**Scale**	
Repurchase Intention	$\bar{X}$	**Std Deviation**
I am a regular tourist to this tourists' site	3.3	1.45
I do not think I will make repurchase of the service or product of this tourists' site	2.3	1.18
This tourist site competitive pricing strategy encourages me to make return visit?	3.5	1.67
I consider competitive pricing strategy of this tourists' site a better strategy for motivating repurchase intentions of tourists?	3.4	1.49

Source: Field Survey, 2024

From Table 4 above the mean value for the first statement, "I enjoy satisfaction in purchasing the product of this tourist site because its customer – based pricing system" is 3.3, and this is greater than the criterion mean value of 2.50. This implies that there is agreement among the respondents (tourists) that they enjoy customer satisfaction at any time they purchase their tourists sites products because they consider the perception of customers in fixing prices. However, they rejected the statement, "this tourist site does not place competitive price on its products and services to demonstrate commitment to customer satisfaction, because the mean value 2.3 is less than the acceptable criterion mean value of 2.5. This implies that the respondents/tourists rejected the statement and this means that the respondents are satisfied with the competitive pricing strategy offered by their various tourists sites which they like to patronize. Moreover, this statement "I consider this tourist site to cheap and satisfying when compare to the competitors' price offer, recorded a mean rating of 3.5, which is greater than the criterion mean value. This suggests the respondents agreed that their tourist sites offer cheap and competitive price to customers which is the cause of customer satisfaction they experience when they visit. There is a strong agreement among the respondents that they feel satisfied with the quality of the sites not minding their adoption of price leadership (offering high price). This is in view of the fact that the mean value of the statement as satisfactory as it offers quality service is 3.4 which is greater than the criterion mean value of 2.50. It then follows that respondents/tourists expressed a high level of satisfaction on the service quality of the tourists' sites**.**

Table 5 Analysis of tourists Responses on word-of-mouth

Questions in State Form	**Scale**	
Word-of-Mouth	$\bar{X}$	**Std Deviation**
I like to tell my friends about the services of this tourists' site?	3.4	1.5
If I have the opportunity I will compile my experiences in this tourists' site for other people to share my satisfying experience	3.4	1.5
I so much rely on the information given to me by friends about this tourists' site?	2.0	1.2
I will not fail to tell others about my horrible experience in this tourists' site??	3.4	1.5

Source: Field Survey, 2024

From Table 5 above it was established that the mean value for the statement "I patronize this tourists' site regularly because it offers discount price for its services", is 3.4, and since the mean value is greater than the criterion mean value of 2.50, it then follows that there is consensus the respondents that tourists regular patronage to tourists' sites is as the result the offer of discount prices for their services Similarly, the mean value for the statement, I feel it is advisable for this tourists' site to adopt competitive pricing strategy for attracting more patronage, is 3.4, revealing that the respondents agreed that competitive pricing strategy leads to increase in patronage. On the other hand, the respondents disagreed to the statements "I consider competitive pricing strategy adopted by this tourists' site is capable of reducing rate of patronage in this tourists site", since the mean value 2.0 is less than criterion mean value of 2.5. In other words competitive pricing strategy does not reduce rate of patronage of tourists' site. However, in another development the respondents (tourists) agreed that they like to patronize their choice tourists' site because they see it as a place where they get value for their money as the pricing system is customer-based. This agreement is subsequent upon the fact that the mean value of the statement "I like to patronize this tourists' site because I see it as a place where I get value for my money as its pricing system is customer-based is 3.4 which is greater than the acceptance criterion mean value which 2.50.

TEST OF HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses stated in section one of this reports are thereby tested statistically using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Technique.

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between competitive pricing strategy and tourists' repurchase intention

Table 6: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Test of Ho_1

Ho_1	There is significant relationship between competitive pricing strategy and tourists' repurchase intention	Pearson Correlation = 0.88 Significance = 0.05 SA = 50 A = 70 D = 11 SD = 5	Valid

Source: Pearson Product Moment Correlation – SPSS Version 21.0

The Table 6 above shows that the Pearson Product Moment Correlation is 0.88 which indicates that there is significant relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable. Hence, it is concluded that there is significant relationship between competitive pricing strategy and tourists' repurchase intention.

Ho_2: Tourists' sites' competitive pricing strategy does not significantly relate with word-of-mouth promotion

To test hypotheses two, data on Table 3 were used

Table 7: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Test of Ho_2

Ho_2	Tourists' sites' competitive pricing strategy significantly relate with word-of-mouth promotion	Pearson Correlation = 0.89 Sig = 0.05 SA = 62 A = 20 D = 2 SD = 2	Valid

Source: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Test, 2024

The above table 7 indicates that the Pearson Product Moment Correlation is 0.89 which reveals that there is significant relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable. Hence, this work concludes that Tourists' sites' competitive pricing strategy significantly relate with word-of-mouth promotion**.**

Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between discount pricing and patronage of tourists' sites in the South-East, Nigeria

To test hypotheses three, data analyzed on Table 4 were adopted

Table 8: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Test of Ho_3

Ho_3	There is significant relationship between discount pricing and patronage of tourists' sites in the South-East, Nigeria	Pearson Correlation = 0.85 Sig = 0.05 SA = 80 A = 40 D = 6 SD = 10	Valid

Source: Pearson Product Moment Correlation SPSS Version 21.0

The table 8 above shows that the Pearson Product Moment Correlation is 0.85 indicating significant effect on variable (independent and dependent). We therefore conclude that there is significant relationship between discount pricing and patronage of tourists' sites in the South-East, Nigeria

Ho_4: There is no significant relationship between Discount pricing strategy and word-of-mouth promotion

To test hypotheses four, data analyzed on Table 5 were employed.

Table 9: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Test of Ho_5

Ho_4	There is significant relationship between Discount pricing strategy and word-of-mouth promotion	Pearson Correlation = 0.87 Sig = 0.05 SA = 68 A = 48 D = 18 SD = 2	Valid

Source: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Test for hypothesis 5, 2024

Table 9 above reveals that the Pearson Product Moment Correlation is 0.87 which means customer-based pricing strategy significantly influence patronage of tourists' sites the work therefore conclude that there is significant relationship between Discount pricing strategy and word-of-mouth promotion

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In hypotheses one, it was observed that there is significant relationship between competitive pricing strategy and tourists' repurchase intention. This is in line with the finding of Kwan and Kalemela (2014) who reported that competitive pricing air travelers to travel which leads to repurchase intention. This means that competitive pricing strategy creates the opportunity for tourists to choose tourists sites that offer reasonable price than the others. In competitive pricing system, firms are cautions of the price set by competitors in order not to price themselves out of businesses. This is an advantage to the consumers as they make choice of products or services based on quality and fair price.

In hypotheses two, the coefficient of Pearson Correlation (Pearson r) is 8.9. This indicates that there is a positive relationship between competitive pricing strategy and

word-of-mouth. This finding is in line with the results obtained by Mbithi, Muturi and Rambo (2015), Kwan and Kalamela (2014) who separately adduced that competitive pricing strategy influences word-of-mouth promotion. Tourists prefer to patronize tourists' sites that offer them competitive price.

The Pearson Correlation Coefficient of discount pricing strategy for hypothesis three is 0.85.

This means that there is significant relationship between discount pricing and repurchase intention of tourists' sites in the South-East, Nigeria. The finding of this study is in line with the findings of Tamera Ljupco and Bogdanka (2014) whose results showed that discount pricing determines the level of word of mouth promotion.

For hypothesis four, it was revealed that there is significant relationship between discount pricing strategy of tourists' sites and customer/tourists word-of-mouth promotion. This is because when a tourist site implements discount pricing strategy there is the tendency that the price offer will match the quality of service offer which will engender tourists word-of-mouth promotion. This finding is in line with the finding made by Kabote, and Venga (2014) which indicated that tourists were price sensitive to products.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The section presents summary, conclusion and recommendations emanating from the research findings.

Summary of Findings

The study investigated the relationship between pricing strategies and tourist satisfaction with the selected tourists' sites in South-East, Nigeria. Competitive and discount pricing strategies are the independent variables, whereas tourists' satisfaction is proxied by repurchase decision and word-of-mouth promotion.

The hypotheses formulated for the study were subjected to statistical test using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The findings are the followings:

1. There is significant relationship between competitive pricing strategy and tourists' repurchase intention.
2. Tourists' sites' competitive pricing strategy significantly relate with word-of-mouth promotion.
3. There is significant relationship between discount pricing and repurchase

intention of tourists' sites in the South-East, Nigeria

4. There is significant relationship between Discount pricing strategy and word-of-mouth promotion.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that pricing of products and services of tourist site has become the cardinal attraction among tourists, and in some cases determine whether or not tourists will patronize a particular tourists' site.

In effect, pricing strategies such as competitive and discount pricing are considered significant tools for driving up repurchase intention and word-of-mouth promotion. Hence, significant relationships exist between pricing strategies and tourist satisfaction.

Recommendations

These recommendations are hereby made:

(1) Tourists' Sites should always be flexible in pricing decisions and embrace competitive pricing strategy to invoke repurchase intention among tourists.

(2) There should be employees training programme at regular intervals to shaper their skills for implementing pricing strategies of their tourists' sites, thereby become service-oriented to drive up word-of-mouth promotion powered by the attitude of staff to tourists.

(3) Discount pricing strategy should be adopted especially when it matters most for the tourists' sites in the South-East to attract more tourists and enjoy word-of-mouth promotion and repurchase.

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